

ROYDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Parish Room, St. Remigius Church on Tuesday 29 March 2016 at 7.00 pm

Chairperson: Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Paul Curson

Present: residents of the Parish of Roydon including members of the Parish Council

In attendance: Clerk to Roydon Parish Council, Gareth Roderick-Jones
County Councillor Jenny Chamberlin

The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting, held on 25 March 2015, were agreed and signed.

The format of the 2016 APM was less formal than previous APMs, and consisted of an open discussion of issues of relevance to members of the parish, chaired by Cllr Curson.

The following is a digest of issues and concerns raised and discussed.

Dog fouling

This is more of a problem in some areas of the parish than others. People have been seen failing to clear up after their dogs if they believe themselves to be unobserved. The current provision of dog bins may or may not be sufficient but it is unclear how effective they are; they are also relatively costly to purchase and have emptied regularly. The possibility of having signs up to try to educate people was discussed, as was the provision of bag dispensers. People clearly need to be educated and this could perhaps be done by educating young dog owners through the school. The issue will be discussed during the formal Parish Council Meeting which follows the APM.

The Close drains

Repairs have been carried out on the surface but the drain itself is still blocked (noted by Cllr Chamberlin).

Trees along 1066

These need attention (noted for April meeting agenda).

Queen's 90th birthday

Ways for Roydon to mark the occasion were discussed, narrowed down to three possibilities: the planting of a tree, a new bench, or refurbishing the top of the village sign. The consensus was that the planting of a suitable tree was the preferred way for Roydon. Planting an oak, which has been done to mark previous occasions, was discussed, but Cllr Curson gave an alternative idea which was warmly received. He suggested a black poplar *populus negri* for various reasons: they are Britain's most endangered native tree species; they live for at least 200 years; they favour boggy ground conditions such as parts of the Green where a tree could be planted away from roads and houses; they grow reasonably quickly; they tolerate pollution.

It was also agreed that a ceremonial planting of the tree should be organized and should involve the oldest resident/pupils of the Primary School, and that the tree should be protected by a suitable tree guard and marked with a plaque.

Details will be discussed in the PC meeting which follows.

War Memorial

An updated database with details and photographs of War Memorials across the country is being compiled. Cllr Andrew Daniels recently attended a meeting to discuss War Memorials in this area. It is planned to have all the details in place, and any repairs or updates to the memorials completed, in time to mark the centenary of Armistice Day (that is, by 11 November 2018). Cllr Daniels can supply website information; Cllr Curson will submit photographs of the Roydon War Memorial, and an appeal will go out via the Herald magazine for anyone knowing of any names which need to be added to the memorial as it stands.

Wildlife Surveys

Cllr Chamberlin explained that Roydon Churchyard is one of the locations identified to be surveyed as part of a major project working towards a national "living map". Norfolk will be at the forefront of this project, and the Diss-Roydon area has been prioritized. The idea is to produce a detailed countrywide map of natural and semi-natural habitats and the flora and fauna living there, which will enable authorities to develop action plans to protect endangered species where they are most needed. The data gathering will be done mainly by volunteers working under the auspices of the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service; some will be doing desk-based research, and others will be field based. The details of how the data gathering is going to work are being refined and will be made known soon.

Parish Magazine

Currently the parish magazine the Herald has a closing date for publication of mid-month, so the Parish Council is not normally able to get information following its meetings to the public until the following month's edition, sometimes six weeks later. It was suggested that the Parish Council should change its regular meeting date to fit in with the parish magazine; a counter-proposal was that the parish magazine should move its publication deadline to fit in with the Parish Council's meeting dates. This will be discussed at the April meeting of the Parish Council.

Feedback on Informal APM

The consensus was that the informal style of the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting was appropriate and that it stimulated open debate and provided an opportunity for extended discussion which limited time in normal Parish Council meetings did not.

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm